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# GSUniverse

Governors State University's Weekly Newsletter

March 31 – April 4, 2003

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*"Time is the only critic without ambition."*

John Steinbeck

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## Some Budget News at Last on FY03

GSU and other public universities have been told of the significant rescission they are required to make for FY03. To meet the mandated reduction, GSU will keep in force its policy to rescind 50 percent of all non-personal unencumbered funds, maintain an absolute freeze on hiring, and close the books on FY03 effective today, April 4. In a letter to the university community, President Stuart Fagan said, "While a reduction of this magnitude this late in the fiscal year hardly qualifies as good news, it is certainly an improvement over the reductions originally proposed and reflects well on the efforts of the presidents of the public universities to inform the Governor, the Bureau of the Budget, and the Legislature about the business side of higher education."

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## Still No Budget News On FY04

President Fagan reported that at the IBHE meeting last Tuesday there was no definitive indication of the budget the governor would propose on April 9 for higher education for FY04. However, most believe the Governor's proposed budget for FY04 will include a reduction in appropriations of eight percent to 10 percent. As a result, our budget for the next fiscal year may be at the same level as FY2000.

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## Call For Nominations

The Honorary Degree Committee, chaired by Dr. Bill Nowlin, has issued a call for nominations for individuals to receive honorary degrees from GSU. Individuals selected should have demonstrated excellence in their fields and service to the community. Nomination forms will be distributed next week.

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## Funding Workshop: Grant Expertise Shared

On Friday, March 28, the Graduate Council's Sub-Committee on Extramural Funding and Support conducted a workshop to present the sub-committee's analysis of the federal budget that targeted possible sources of grants for GSU faculty and staff. Joining Dr. Deborah Holdstein, Faculty Associate for Graduate Studies and Research and Chair of the Graduate Council, were Mari Ellen Leverence, Chair of the Sub-Committee, and members Nick Battaglia, Hilary Burkinshaw, Sheryl Szot Gallaher, Judy Gustawson, and John Swain. Sub-Committee members who contributed to the materials presented at the workshop were Connie Emmerling, Cheryl Mejta, Jeff Slovak, and John Yunger. Approximately 35 faculty and staff attended the meeting, which featured a wide-ranging discussion about grant opportunities as well as the support structures necessary to foster research and grant applications at GSU.

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## Benefits Fair

The Department of Human Resources is sponsoring GSU's annual Benefits Fair, scheduled for Thursday, May 8, 2003, from 9:00 A.M. to 4:00 P.M. in the Hall of Governors. The Benefits Fair will host appropriate vendors who will answer any benefits questions employees – Faculty, Administrative, and Staff – might have. This year, the Benefits Choice Period is from May 1 to 31. During this period, changes may be made to benefits plans with no questions asked.

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## GSU ScholarShip Sails On

Dr. Eric Martin, assistant provost and director of the center for quality, was published in *Conflicts and Crises in the Composition Classroom – and What Instructors Can Do About Them*. The book, part of the CrossCurrents: New Perspectives in Rhetoric and Composition series includes Martin's essay, "Teaching Without Armor," which explores the balance between teaching composition with impersonal rigidity and teaching composition with a focus on listening and allowing learning through personal explorations by the student.

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## Century Development Conducting House Feasibility Study

On-campus housing for GSU has been a topic of discussion of late and after talks with two campus housing development companies President Stuart Fagan and Provost Paul Keys selected one, Century Development, to conduct a campus housing feasibility study for Governors State. "First things first," said Keys. "We need to know if on-campus housing is an idea that's right for GSU." With the go-ahead from GSU, Century is currently conducting the study, which includes a comprehensive examination of the community, local rents, university budget and facilities. "This costs us nothing, and it certainly commits us to nothing," Keys explained of the process. Results of the study should be presented by Century within a month.

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## First Meeting: Advising and Retention Steering Committee

The drop is drastic: As of December 23, 2002, registration for the Winter Trimester was up by 7.6 percent in terms of headcount from the same time the previous year. By March 27 that number had dwindled to a negative .14 percent. Unfortunately, this isn't a new phenomenon. GSU has averaged a loss of 667 registered students every trimester since the fall of 1996. In response, President Fagan and Provost Keys have established the Advising and Retention Steering Committee, which held its first meeting April 2. Well-attended by invited division chairs, the meeting was co-chaired by Joyce Harris, lead academic advisor for the BOG program, and (filling in for Larry Polselli, executive director of admission and student recruitment) Marlene Castellanos, admission counselor, admission and student recruitment. "Research supports the idea," said Harris, "that early intervention or pre-advising can prevent much of that kind of loss. We are exploring that concept to see how it might help us here at GSU."

The April 2 meeting was the first step in assessing the impact of advising on retention as directly related to GSU. "The division chairs were extremely helpful," said Castellanos. "Right now, we're trying to get a handle on the issues involved in the entire advising process, where it works and where it can be improved."

Harris said the next steps will be taken with the goal of creating a student-friendly advising process that can solve problems before they develop.

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## Rumor Hotline

No need to wallow in rumor – get the facts. Test rumors against the truth by sending an e-mail to [GSUfacts@govst.edu](mailto:GSUfacts@govst.edu). Tell us the rumor, we'll get the truth and give you an answer within 48 hours. It's a confidential procedure. The program is administered by Public Affairs.